

§ 143B-285.23. Powers and duties of the Secretary of Environmental Quality.

The Secretary of Environmental Quality shall:

- (1) Establish an Office of Environmental Education and Public Affairs to:
 - a. Serve as a clearinghouse of environmental information for the State.
 - b. Plan for the Department's future needs for environmental education materials and programs.
 - c. Maintain a computerized database of existing education materials and programs within the Department.
 - d. Maintain a speaker's bureau of environmental specialists to address environmental concerns and issues in communities across the State.
 - e. Evaluate opportunities for establishing regional environmental education centers.
 - f. Administer the Project Tomorrow Award Program to encourage school children to discover and explore ways to protect the environment.
 - g. Assist the Department of Public Instruction in integrating environmental education into course curricula.
 - h. Develop and implement a grants and award program for environmental education projects in schools and communities.
- (2) Coordinate, through technical assistance and staff support and with participation of the Department of Public Instruction and other relevant agencies, institutions, and citizens, the planning and implementation of a statewide program of environmental education.
- (3) Be responsible for such matters as the purchase of educational equipment, materials, and supplies; the construction or modification of facilities; and the employment of consultants and other personnel necessary to carry out the provisions of this Part.
- (4) Encourage coordination between the various State and federal agencies, citizens groups, and the business and industrial community, in the dissemination of environmental information and education.
- (5) Utilize existing programs, educational materials, or facilities, both public and private, wherever feasible. (1993, c. 501, s. 28; 1997-443, s. 11A.119(a); 2010-31, s. 13.1A(d); 2015-241, s. 14.30(v).)